

**ISSN** INTERNATIONAL  
STANDARD  
SERIAL  
NUMBER

ISSN-2321-7065

**IJELLH**

# **International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities**

Indexed, Peer Reviewed (Refereed), UGC Approved Journal



## **Volume 7, Issue 2, February 2019**

[www.ijellh.com](http://www.ijellh.com)

Kavita Upadhyay

Doctorate Research Scholar

Assistant Professor and Chief Corporate Trainer

Business Communication & Soft Skills

Amity International Business School (AIBS)

Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India

kthapliyal@amity.edu

thapliyal2005@gmail.com

### Blending Hard & Soft Skills for Professional Excellence in Management- An Analysis

“The mark of higher education isn’t the knowledge you accumulate in your head. It is the skills you gain about how to learn”

Adam Grant

Abstract: When it comes to words, hard and soft are opposite to each other in nature and feel; but when skill word suffixed to the said words, it becomes Hard Skills and Soft Skills at this point of time its density and volume becomes intensively great. Education plays a vital role in the development of each one us; it can be both ways formal and informal. In the same way, hard skills are the technical skills and associations of an individual pertaining to a field or specialization in which an individual wants to develop career and want to succeed. Hard skills are the degrees and diplomas along with certification that we attain doing a professional course on regular or distant mode of learning. Soft Skills are the required people’s skill that are not technical in nature but has great influence in handling people and management. It talks about emotional intelligence, motivation, teamwork, communication skills, leadership various other forms of connecting human relations.

The researcher is a faculty of Business communication and Soft Skills and working as a corporate trainer. The study is an attempt to understand from the industrial perspective through a questionnaire survey the role of soft skills in professional development from industrial overview. Twelve questions are framed covering various aspects of soft skills and 150 industry mentors across NCR (National Capital Region) are taken into consideration covering various sectors of management.

## Introduction

We are living at the age of disruptive innovation where degrees are no guarantee for a job; they are the eligibility to apply for a job. In the world of innovation, we need a good blend of Right Knowledge of the Subject/Trade and Right Skills for the trade. We have many field of knowledge to invest our time and outcome, but the most sorted career is Management. A discipline of managing process, product and people is management. Learners from diverse field of academics and industry migrate to learn management because in the world of technological advancement handling machines is not a problem, the stress comes to handle the most complicated machine i.e. Human Being. Management teaches us to effectively deal with material, man and machine. Management is at every stage of life – personal and professional. Until one has not attained success at personal front, he/she can never balance his/her professional front. Thus, we can say that management is a backbone and enables us to plan, organize, direct and control roles and responsibilities at all ends of life. In the arena of business and business relationship management, there are various fields like marketing, human resource, information technology, operations, finance and international business operated in organizations like public, private, autonomous, not for profit etc. their purpose is make people work together to achieve desired outcome by maintaining dignity, ethics with keeping the community in mind.

Management is at every footstep of live, whether big or small. Days are over when inherent trades, patterns and experience were sound enough to retain the legacy of business. Today just having hard skills, degree or diploma will not support in maintaining, retaining and sustaining business and relations. We must learn to balance hard and soft skills together in managing man, material and machine. Remember, 'we are hired for our skills but fired for our behaviour'.

#### Understanding Hard and Soft Skills

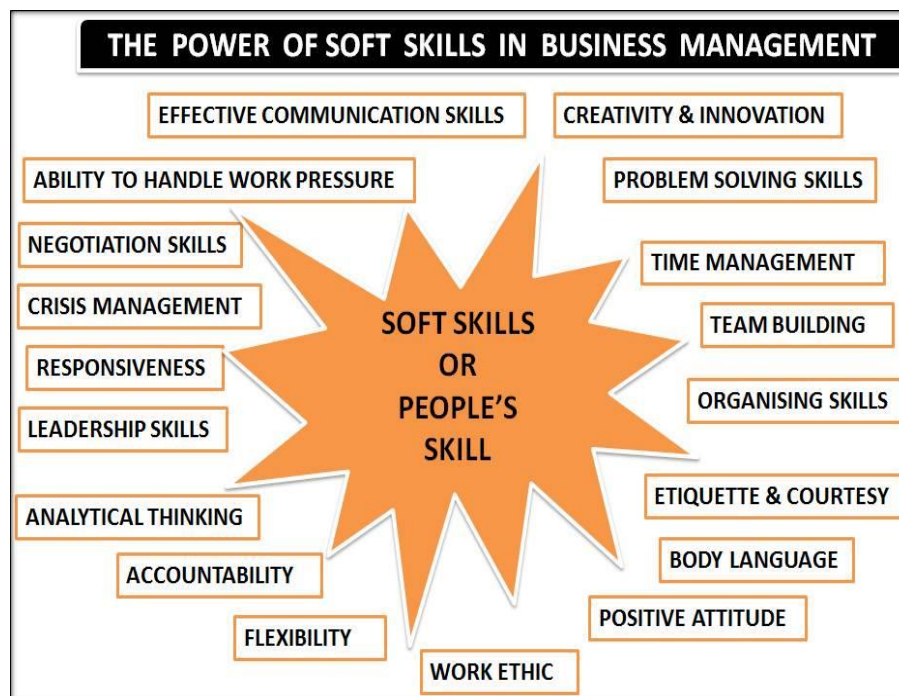
Hard skills are the institutional skills that include education qualification, level of learning as degree, diploma and certification. These skills can be learned through education and training. In the modern times there are specific hard skills and learners as per the demand of the industry enrolls themselves to master these hard skills. Hard Skills can be learnt through training and continuous learning. Hard skills are those that you need to be able to perform a particular job. These often vary depending on the type of role you will be performing or the industry in which you will be working in. Hard skill can typically be developed through studying and training. Examples of hard skills include an accountancy diploma, fluency in a foreign language, knowledge of a particular software or experience in a particular industry sector.

Soft Skills are the personal trades and inner qualities of an individual that he/she has inherited or developed with the due course of time. Soft Skills are the trade and skills that helps the individual to navigate smoothly through his hard and critical time and situation with confidence, good communication, self-motivation and people management skills.

Soft skills are personality trades that help in minimizing the hardships of one's life with more ease and maturity. It helps an individual to establish his rapport with others in most acceptable manner, where one learns to respect others and also ensures to make people work not by force but by the charm of the leadership, who leads by example.

Soft Skills helps in balancing work-life balance, emotional control, and stability of mind. It builds right attitude and aptitude, to work with teams within and outside the organization by navigating smoothly at the times of turbulence.

Soft skills on the other hand are usually self-taught and self-developed. Unlike hard skills they are not specific to an industry or job. As such, they are becoming increasingly valuable to all employers, regardless of the type of industry they operate in, as it helps them to understand how you will fit in with their working environment and how you will perform as one of their employees.



### Marketing and its Importance in Management

Marketing is an art of connecting with people and generating a desire in their minds to generate a curiosity towards a product or service. Modern era is very exciting for marketing professionals but days are over when traditional market and marketing techniques were kind enough to deliver the best results.

Marketing and its Importance in Management	
Hard Skills	Soft Skills
Data Analytics. Brand Building Content Marketing Product Marketing Social Media Marketing Mobile Marketing Email Marketing Visual Marketing Story Narrative Marketing Project Marketing Advertising and Promotion SEO Technological proficiency- Tools and Platforms Marketing Video Marketing Consumer Behaviourist	Planning & Organizing Flexibility Communication Skills Confidence Team building Negotiation Cross-Cultural Management Cross-Cultural Communication Time management Business Etiquette Public Speaking Intuition. Emotional intelligence Collaboration Curiosity Crisis Management

Markets of modern times are inversely positioned and brands need to navigate their own story to capture the global audience with the flavor of global but the poise of local needs. Since comparative information of any innovative product is available on the finger tips of the consumer, it is not a child play to befool the most literate consumer. Hence, we need to have a good mix of hard and soft skills together to deal with the consumers of modern era.

Marketing professionals along with their marketing degree need great skills to convenience people and have to network outside their comforts zones. Pressure and deadlines are always around them. Good communication and business etiquette skills help the marketing professionals to collaborate and negotiate with diverse culture and organizations with more courage and confidence. Hard Skills in marketing gives the professional a deeper insight about the markets, product information, tools and techniques to win customers and beat the competition keeping all concerns in mind. Cross-cultural communication and management



allows the marketing to expedite business opportunities at global platforms, where he is more flexible to innovate and collaborate with like-minded people and traders.

### Financial and its Importance in Management

In every stage of life, we need finance. A field of study that helps in understanding money, its role in investment, return and risk management is Finance. In personal and professional front, we need to have a great understanding of finance. The role of financial advisor is to give right management to his clients for investment and returns with measuring calculative risk for his funds and portfolios. Since finance people are dealing with the value proposition such as wealth, it becomes utmost important for them to have great blend of hard and soft skills together as emotion is very primitive part of financial dealing.

Financial and its Importance in Management	
Hard Skills	Soft Skills
Credible Financial Degree/Diploma Financial Reporting Accountancy Economics Statistics Taxation Budgeting Financial Assets Insurance Planning Public Finance Corporate Finance Personal Finance Social Finance Behavioural Finance IT Skills	Decision Making Problem Solving Forecasting Presentation Skills Stress Management Communication Skills Trustworthiness Analytical writing Risk Taking Criticism Handling Good Listening Critical Thinking Flexibility Self-management Professionalism Work Ethics

It is always advantage of having a good blend of hard and soft skills for best result orientation. Finance is a field where experience counts more than degree. Having, right degree and right attitude can help the financial learners in translating the business into professional wellbeing.

Work ethics, integrity is the professional edge to the financial experts. Since finance has also entered to social and behavioural finance, listening, forecasting, decision making, crisis handling all are very indispensable part in finance; therefore a good blend of hard and soft skills are essential to excel in the field of finance.

### Human Resource (HR) and its Importance in Management

When we compare capital, human capital is one of the most valuable resources that cannot be measured through money. Dealing with human, we need professionalism and ethical concerns including cultural and emotional understanding. Human Resource Management (HRM/HR) is one of the most sorted fields in management. Human resource helps in handling workforce and helps in building employee relations.

#### Human Resource (HR) and its Importance in Management

##### Hard Skills

- Compensation and Benefit
- Employee Recruitment and Selection
- Employee Engagement
- Diversity and Inclusion Management
- Human Resource Information Systems (HRIS)
- Employee Engagement
- Corporate Communication
- HR Generalist
- HR Consultant
- HR Legal Advisors
- Labour Relations
- Training and Development
- Compliance Management
- Payroll Specialist
- HR Lead Generation

##### Soft Skills

- Communication Skills
- Public Speaking
- Media Communication
- Relationship Management
- Organizing Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Networking Skills
- Negotiation skills
- Strategic Thinking
- Innovative and Creative Skills
- Listening Skills
- Effective Writing Skills
- Planning and Executing Skills
- Sensitization and Cross Cultural Understanding
- Excellent People Management Skills
- Ethical Skills
- Empathy
- Crisis Management
- Change Management Skills
- Adaptive and Flexible
- Research



HR professionals need to manage people within various departments in the organization. From recruitment to exit interviews, administration, compensation, employee retention, engagement, talent management, performance management, planning, organizing, delegating, crisis management, disaster management, unrest, training and development, change management all comes under the territory of Human Resource. Thus dealing with vast organizational issues and challenges only hard skills cannot help in resolving human issues and concern, it must be mutually taken with the help of soft skills because soft skills are people management skills that support in reducing hard times.

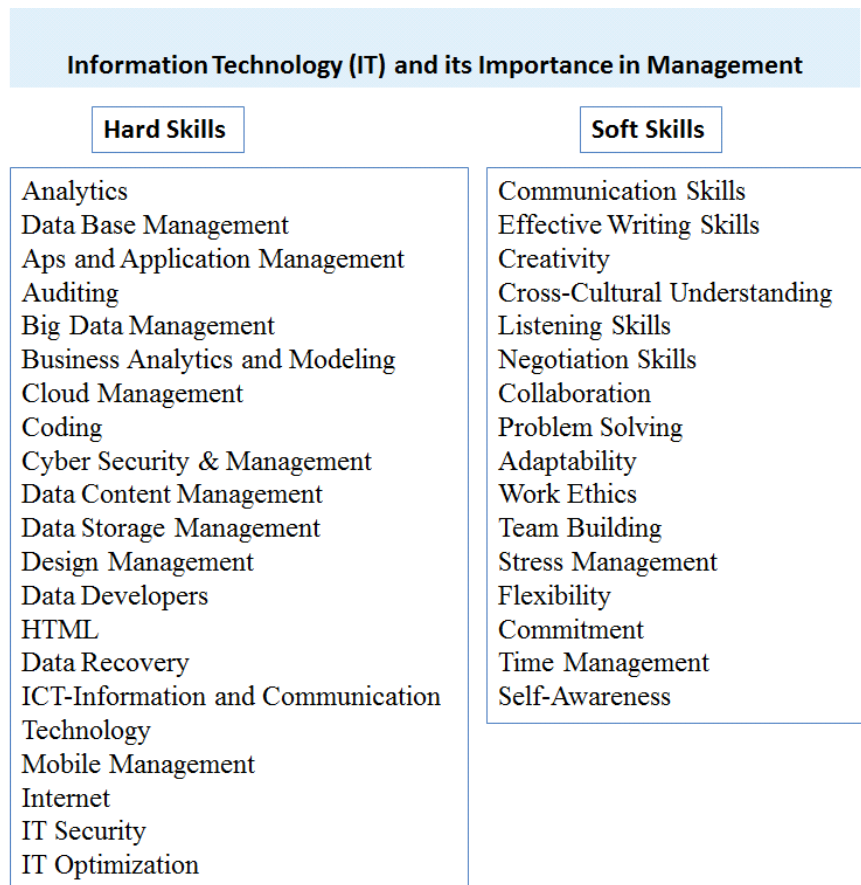
Human resource degree helps to sharpen our understanding about organizations, but organizations run by people. To deal with people effective communication, teamwork, listening all is the most required skills and attributes to success. Public speaking, crisis handling, organizing, adaptability and flexibility are very primitive part of HR. Hence, we need a great blend of both hard and soft skills for outshining in the area of Human Resource.

#### Information Technology (IT) and its Importance in Management

The modern era is also known as the era of Information Technology. At every stage of our life, we are using technology-big or small, general or complicated. IT has significantly optimized the business scenario within and outside the organizations. Information technology has effectively enhanced the business by helping in decision-making, collaboration, networking, bringing pool of think tankers together, and remote sensing and has given great strength to the business organizations. It is IT; that prepares people to accept the change and adopt new techniques for a better world.

We are living in the world of technology, digital tools have replaced the traditional style of businesses and techniques of doing business. IT has given wings to people to expand their

horizon and new career opportunities to look and work upon. The impossible looking things are just possible by the innovation in IT. Robotics, artificial intelligence, cloud has changed the definition and scenario of markets today. Therefore blending IT with soft skills will equip the learners to travel long way keeping innovation and people together.



As we, all know that advancement in technology is making human life easy on the other side it is creating lots of disturbance and hazards to while handling technology. Cybercrime, hacking, phishing, and malware, pharming stealing personal and professional data thus dealing with turbulence time's soft skills play a significant role and if blending with hard skills it can boost the confidence of people and mold them towards right management. Soft skills also inspire people and guide them towards self-awareness and commitment. Work ethics, cross-cultural understanding, collaboration and adaptability all are very enriching part to be integrated with the field of IT. Blending both hard and soft skills will help in promoting a good

environment to handle technology with people skills and have a sense of understanding and respecting each other.

### Operation and its Importance in Management

The thin line difference between successful and unsuccessful organizations to a large extent depends on its operational functioning. Operation management is the key element and helps in coordinating at all levels such as material, labour, goods & services and even feedback. It has a wide range of coverage at various junctures and supports the business from raw to finish. Operation management deals with material, production, provisioning, procurement and resource management at both front and backend support. The function of operation team is not to only support but also to ensure organization make good profit out of all investment and gain maximum returns. We can say that the link between goods and clients in the most effective and systematic way is the main functioning of the operation department.

Operation and its Importance in Management	
Hard Skills	Soft Skills
Project Management Planning Management Quality Control Management Supply Chain Management Material Management Logistics Management Delivery Management Auditing Inventory Management Production Management Compliance Safety, Risk and Maintenance Management Disaster Management Total Quality Management Service Management	Communication and Convincing Skills Planning Skills Leadership Patience Listening Decision Making Organizational Skills Time Management Skills Disaster Management Skills Ownership Persuasiveness Adaptability Delegation Motivation Stress Management Resourcefulness

### International Business and its Importance in Management

The knowledge of International Business helps the learners to get well verse with the numerous cross-cultural issues, trades, ethics, environment, etiquette, global community, tradition, language, ethnicity, law, discipline and many other issues affecting business.

International Business knowledge brings lot of career options in the young professionals and enables them to establish globally with great acceptance and understanding. It broadens ones association and growth opportunities due to cross-cultural management and cross-cultural communication skills. In the vast changing global world, it is very essential to have a good knowledge of global economics and culture because it gives individual, society and nation a great opportunity to connect with like-minded people for personal and professional excellence and growth. The knowledge of international business allows the professionals to travel with ease and dignity to various destinations, negotiate on various forums of management, and connect to pool of intellectual talent in various areas of management and business development. In the rapid changing global scenario of VUCA-Volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, the international business management skills enables to establish a deeper sense of global business, its expansion, global scenarios, culture, trade, rules and regulations and its impact on local and global needs.

**International Business and its Importance in Management****Hard Skills**

International Business  
International Trade Policies  
International Finance & Policies  
Global Corporate Governance  
International Strategic Management  
International Law  
Managing Global Competition  
International Business Simulations  
Ethics and Global Issues in  
International Business

**Soft Skills**

Communication Skills  
Effective Writing Skills  
Creativity  
Cross-Cultural Management  
Cross-cultural communication  
Excellent networking abilities  
Collaboration  
Interpersonal influence  
Adaptive thinking  
Emotional Intelligence  
Resilience  
Work Ethics  
Reputation Management  
Public Speaking  
Problem Solving  
Crisis Management

Since global boundaries are shrinking, it has become paramount for international learners to have all the skills and trades to capture the global economy.

Thus, we can say both lot hard and soft skills are important for learning and dealing with situation, time and technology. Since we have to deal with human, where psychology and psychological issues are prime we must have emotional intelligence, right attitude, team spirit, good listening skills, adaptability, patience and tolerance, negotiation, positive outlook, openness to feedback and criticism. Every generation has advancement to deal better with technology but the experienced are those who know how effectively one has to deal with human being.

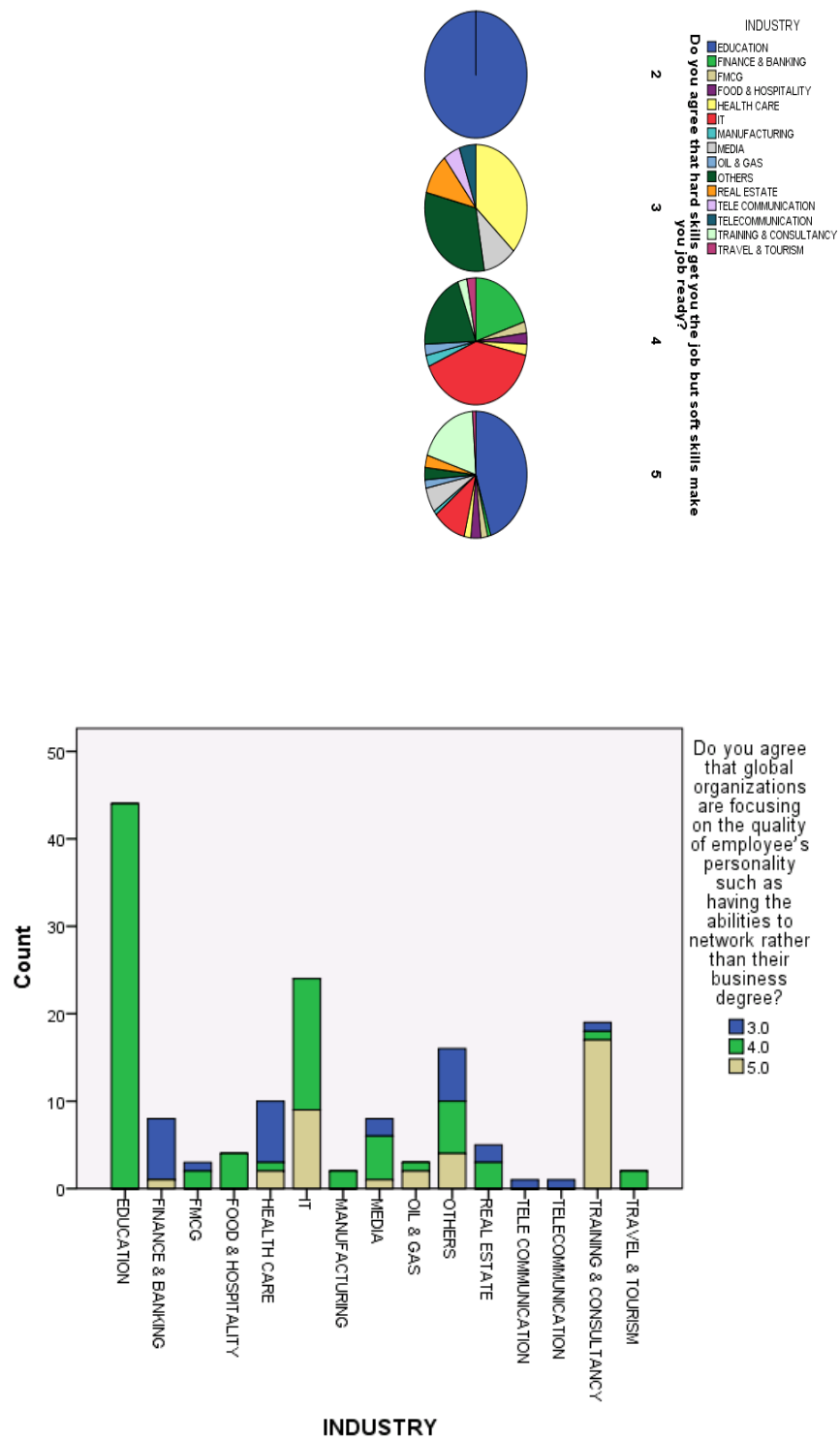
## Analysis of Questionnaire from 150 Industry Mentors (NCR)

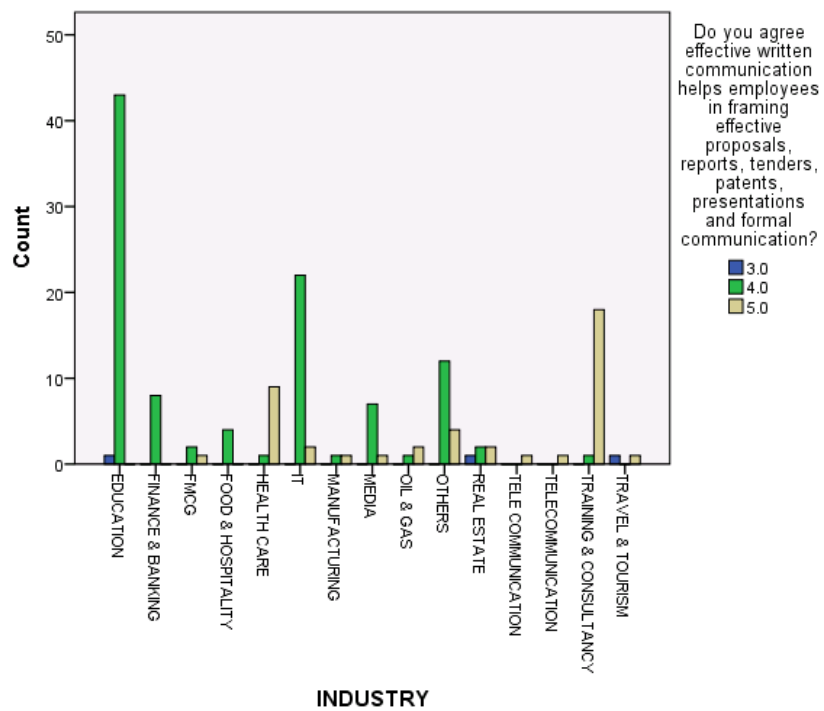
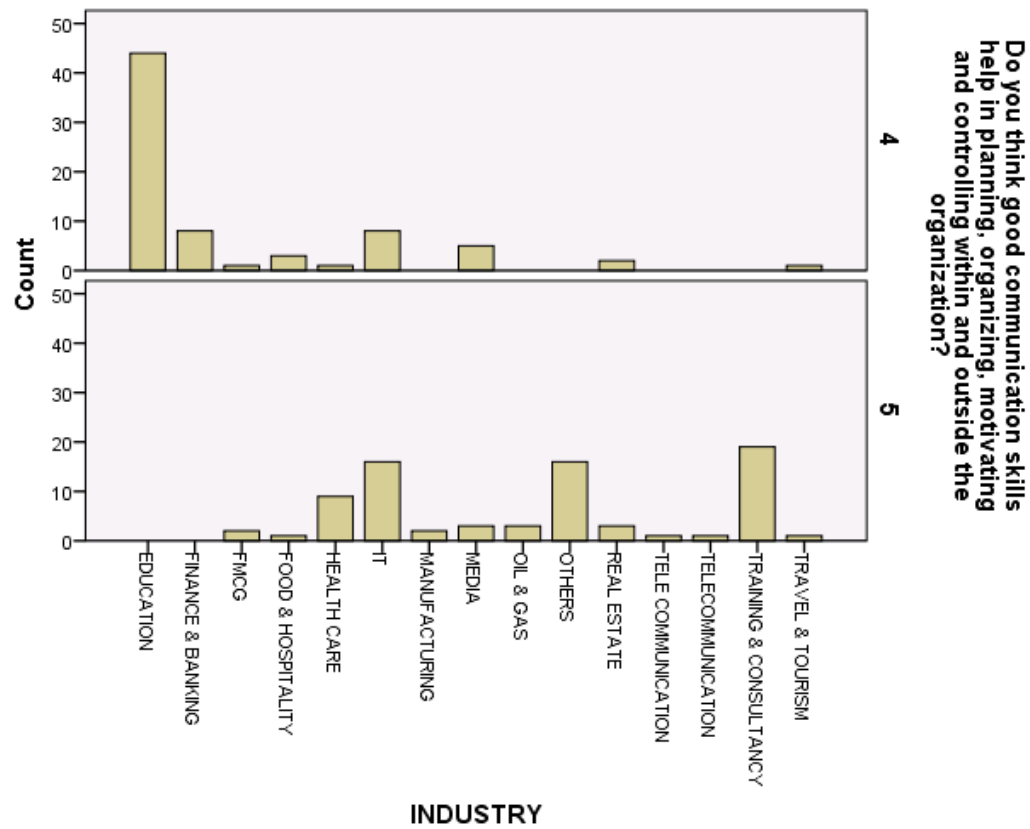
## Descriptive Statistics

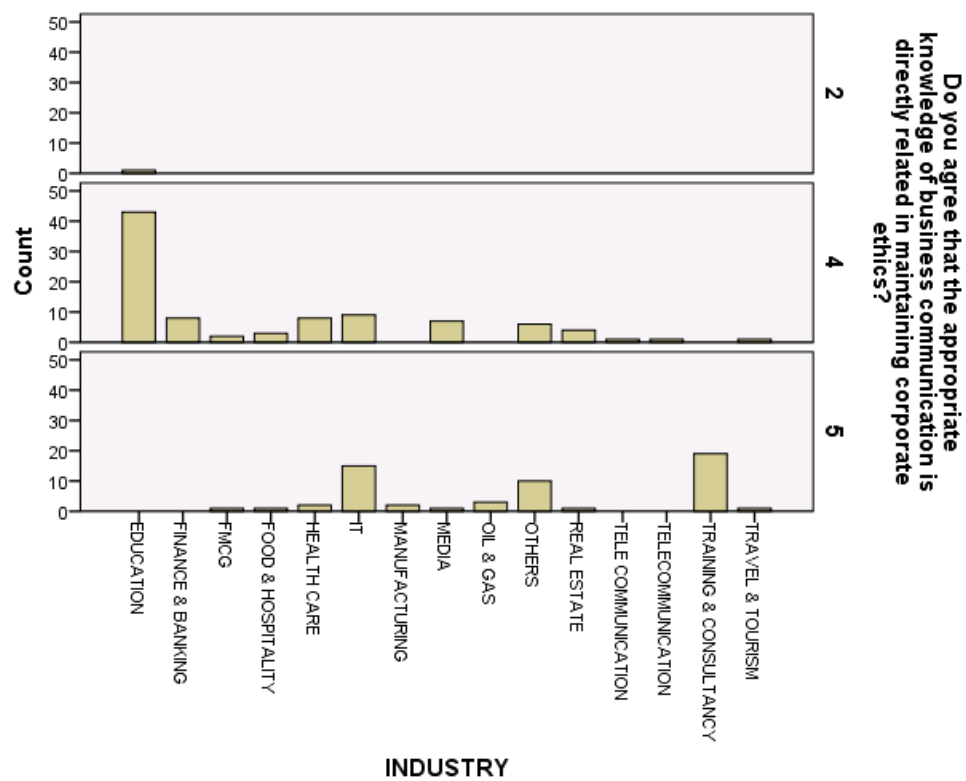
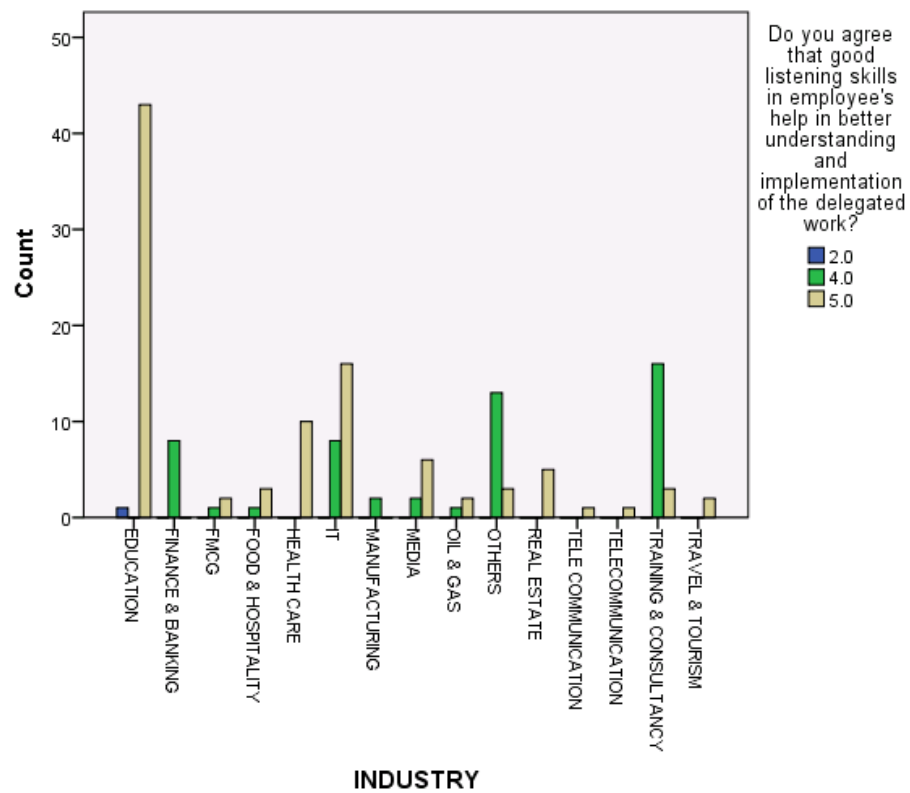
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1. Do you agree that business communication and soft skills are the most vital skills in business management and directly related to growth in the organizations?	150	4.0	5.0	4.860	.3481
Q2. Do you agree that hard skills get you the job but soft skills make you job ready?	150	2.0	5.0	4.493	.7396
Q3. Do you think good communication skills help in planning, organizing, motivating and controlling within and outside the organization?	150	4.0	5.0	4.513	.5015
Q4. Do you agree effective written communication helps employees in framing effective proposals, reports, tenders, patents, presentations and formal communication?	150	3.0	5.0	4.267	.4870
Q5. Do you agree that good listening skills in employee's help in better understanding and implementation of the delegated work?	150	2.0	5.0	4.633	.5235

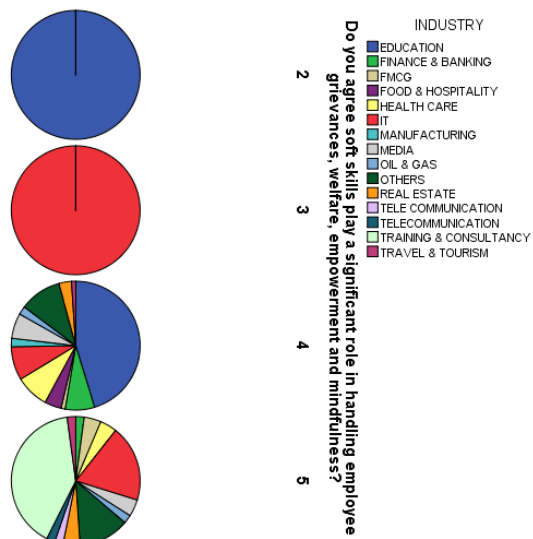
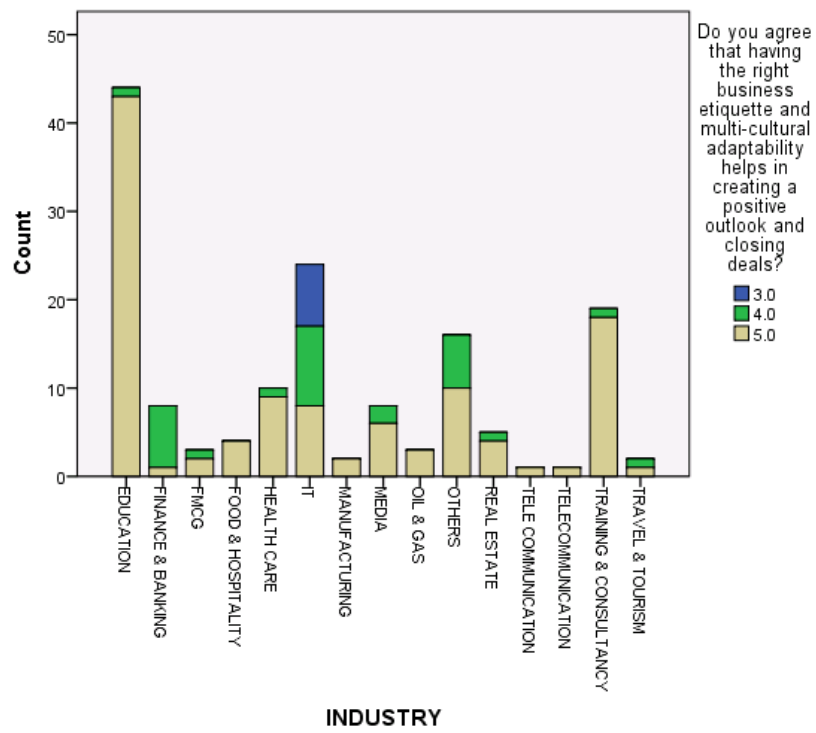
Q6. Do you agree that your behavioral skills help you to remain calm and diplomatic in combatting business disagreements and stress?	150	3.0	5.0	4.647	.4934
Q7. Do you agree that the appropriate knowledge of business communication is directly related in maintaining corporate ethics?	150	2.0	5.0	4.360	.5217
Q8 Do you agree that having the right business etiquette and multi-cultural adaptability helps in creating a positive outlook and closing deals?	150	3.0	5.0	4.707	.5501
Q9. Does business communication and soft skills help in maintaining work life balance, women empowerment and gender equality in organizations?	150	2.0	5.0	3.960	.6842
Q10. Do you agree soft skills play a significant role in handling employee grievances, welfare, empowerment and mindfulness?	150	2.0	5.0	4.253	.5698
Q11. Do you agree that global organizations are focusing on the quality of employee's personality such as having the abilities to network rather than their business degree?	150	3.0	5.0	4.053	.6532
Q12. Do you agree that many diversified sectors while filling strategic or key posts give priority to industry qualifications rather than the candidate's hard skills?	150	3.0	5.0	4.493	.7750
Valid N (listwise)	150				

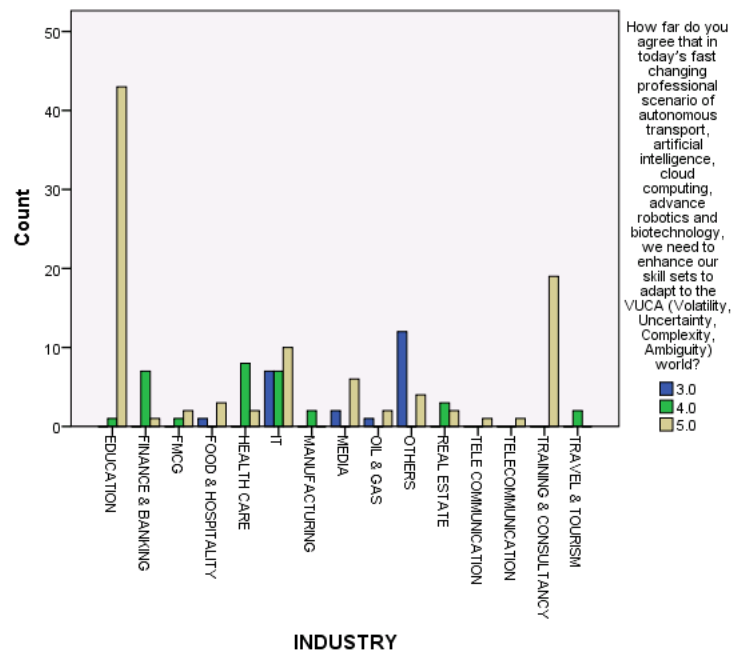












Results: All the statistical graphs indicate that soft skills are keys to break hardships and promote positive reinforcement and helps in developing fair communication. It promotes emotional intelligences, cultural heritage, trust and ownership.

### References

- Alex, D. K. (2010). *Soft Skills - Know yourself and Know your World*. S Chand.
- Courtland L. Bovee, John V. Thill, Abha Chatterjee. (2014). *Business Communication Today*. Pearson Foundation.
- McFarlin, K. (2018, December Thursday). *The Importance of Soft Skills in the Workplace*. Retrieved from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/importance-soft-skills-workplace-10111.html>
- Ramesh, G. (5 September 2013). *The Ace of Soft Skills: Attitude, Communication and Etiquette for Success*. Delhi, Chennai, Chandigarh: Pearson Education.
- SCHULZ, B. (2008). *The Importance of Soft Skills: Education beyond academic knowledge*. Retrieved from NAWA Journal of Language and Communication: <http://www.citethisforme.com/topic-ideas/business-marketing/Soft%20skills-12454583>
- Sudershan Banerjee, Pooran Chandra Pandey, Aloknath De, Crispian Tan, Lokesh Mehra. (2016). *Effective Business Communication*. Centre for Education Research & Growth CGER.